

1964

Eighty-sixth Season

1965

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY  
THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Charles A. Sink, President

Gail W. Rector, Executive Director

Lester McCoy, Conductor

Third Program

Eighty-sixth Annual Choral Union Series

Complete Series 3438

Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra  
STANISLAW WISLOCKI, *Conductor*

SOLOIST

WLADYSLAW KEDRA, *Pianist*

WEDNESDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 14, 1964, AT 8:30

HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

P R O G R A M

Overture, "The Roman Carnival," Op. 9 . . . . . BERLIOZ

Concerto No. 2 in F minor, Op. 21, for Piano and Orchestra . . . . . CHOPIN

WLADYSLAW KEDRA

Maestoso  
Larghetto  
Allegro vivace

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 3 in E-flat major, Op. 55 ("Eroica") . . . . . BEETHOVEN

Allegro con brio  
Marcia funebre: Adagio assai  
Scherzo: Allegro vivace  
Finale: Allegro molto

NOTE: The University Musical Society has presented The Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra on one previous occasion: January 18, 1961.

*The Steinway is the official piano of the University Musical Society*

A R S      L O N G A      V I T A      B R E V I S

## PROGRAM NOTES

IRVING KOLODIN

### Overture, "The Roman Carnival," Op. 9 . . . . HECTOR BERLIOZ

The dictionary defines a Roman candle as "a kind of firework in the form of a straight cylindrical case (generally held in the hand) characterized by the constant emission of sparks. . . ." Substituting the conductor's baton for the "straight cylindrical case," one can hardly come closer to a visual image for the aural effect of the piece Berlioz struck off originally as an introduction for the second act of his opera *Benvenuto Cellini*. And, Roman candle-like, it has zoomed off from its base on a career of its own as a test piece of instrumental execution and a demonstration of orchestral scoring even more illuminating than Berlioz's famous text on the subject.

In it we encounter such pathbreaking innovations as an English horn solo, a sparkling *salterello* (a lively Italian dance) and a flashing use of the brass, percussion, and strings to give a whirling likeness of pinwheels and rockets as well as Roman candles. If, in a way, Stravinsky's *Fireworks* took up where Berlioz's left off, this is just a conspicuous example among many others of the enduring ingenuity it contains.

### Concerto No. 2 in F minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 21 . . . . . FREDERIC CHOPIN

A prominent critic of the time, François-Joseph Fétis, wrote: "Beethoven has composed music for the piano, but here I am speaking of music for pianists, and in this realm, I find in the inspiration of M. Chopin, indications of a change of form that may in the future exercise considerable influence on this branch of art."

The comparison, it may be noted, was all the more striking because Beethoven had been dead for but five years, and his works were enjoying a period of *réclame* even greater than the French public accorded them in his lifetime. But, one hundred and thirty-odd years later, the words are as true as they were when written: Chopin did exert such a "change of form" and he did "exercise considerable influence on this branch of art." In terms of the concerto of this program, it may be related to the constantly improvisatory character of the piano performance, its projection of an instrumental *coloratura* unlike anything previously heard from the keyboards.

For a work which is not considered "symphonic," the opening orchestral statement is extensive. It serves a curtain raising function similar to those of opening episodes in many Mozart concerti. Indeed, when the curtain has gone up, it is to reveal the primary protagonist, stage center, at the keyboard. Almost at once Chopin launches into a series of statements which, if separated into the components of the works to come, might be identified as, in one instance, part of the *Fantasia-Impromptu*, or in others, of this ballade or that nocturne. This is to say, merely, that at this time of his life, Chopin was overflowing with ideas that were, in time to come, to be channeled into as many different forms as the titles in his catalogue. After a longish statement by the piano, the orchestra has another share of attention on its own, but the emphasis throughout this movement is on the solo instrument and Chopin's exploitation of its mercurial personality.

As mercurial as the piano was under Chopin's transforming sorcery, there was never anything in the least hasty or impatient in his transference of such ideas to paper. Indeed, it is one of the abiding miracles of his genius that, in such a slow movement as this largo, he had the patience to write out every turn and mordent, every arpeggiation and embellishment according to the form it took in his mind. This may seem too expectable a procedure to merit mention, but it was not so for Mozart, for example, or for the vocal composers of the time, who left much to the option of the performer. Such an option in this marvelously expressive song would have left it a mere shadow of what it actually is. Indeed, it is thanks to Chopin's care that we can, today, reconstruct some of the embellishments suitable to the vocal literature of Rossini and Bellini. And for a composer supposedly immune to the orchestral aspects of his writing, the use of tremolo and pizzicato strings was sufficiently ingenious to be reproduced by Berlioz in his treatise on orchestration.

The Chopin of innumerable dance-rhythms—waltz, polonaise, bolero, etc.—is, in embryo, the Chopin of the finale. It is suitable that in this work of his Parisian debut, he should show himself as the composer of the kind of dance to which he returned more often in his career than any other—the mazurka. The principal subjects of the movement are both mazurkas (or at the least, mazurka-like), each with a character of its own. How they sounded on the primitive instrument of Chopin's day would be at best conjecture; one may be sure that today's responsive grand brings them much closer to the way they sounded in the composer's mind . . . the sonorous equivalent of a jetting spray to the eye.

## Symphony No. 3 in E-flat major, Op. 55 ("Eroica")

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

It is well known that the Symphony No. 3, the "Eroica," was originally inscribed to Napoleon Bonaparte at the high tide of Beethoven's admiration for him as revolutionist and liberator. It was in the aftermath of his disillusion, when Napoleon took the title of Emperor, that Beethoven scornfully changed the inscription to read "Sinfonia eroica—composta per festeggiare il sovvenire d'un grand' uomo" ("Heroic symphony, composed to celebrate the memory of a great man").

It is, of course, the first modern symphony in the sense that its content is more consistently demanding of the tonal resource of the present-day orchestra than any previous work. A full string section may or may not contribute to the effect of a Haydn or Mozart symphony, depending on how it is disciplined by the conductor. The *Eroica* without such a string section would inevitably lose power and dramatic effect. The written score expands the orchestra utilized by Beethoven in his preceding symphonies only to the extent of adding a third horn; but the conventional practice of doubling the woodwinds for performance in today's large halls is an imperative here, not a mere expedient. No previous symphony comes even close to the spatial dimensions of this one, but those dimensions are so carefully measured that they must be considered the counterpart of the substance rather than a mere elongation of the structure.

Perhaps the highest tribute to Beethoven's creative vision is the success with which that substance is distributed through the length of the work. From the curt chords that adjust us to the impact of the opening *allegro con brio*, we are impelled by a kind of dramatic force never previously realized in music. For all its length, it is a miracle of compactness, even to the "false" entrance of the horn which gives just the sense of uncertainty and anticipation wanted in this particular place. And to balance the expanse that had preceded, Beethoven evolved the first truly symphonic coda, in which the opening chordal theme is spun out through all the elements of the orchestra, strand upon strand, thickness upon thickness, until it becomes a giant web of sound embracing a cosmos of meaning. Put in the simple framework of the previous observation: sound is the challenge, meaning the reward.

Some of Beethoven's greatest admirers (Berlioz included) were unhappy with the placement of the slow movement, arguing that it interrupted an otherwise logical sequence in which the first movement would represent the hero's triumphs; the scherzo, his well-earned earthly rewards; the funeral march, the sorrow at his human end; and the finale, his glorification. But this is, after all, to take a rather crude view of Beethoven's purpose. If the *Eroica* is limited to the Napoleonic premise, it would nevertheless endeavor to take the measure of the whole man, rather than to provide him with a tonal autobiography. And it is a certainty that musical logic would transcend any other consideration.

The sharpness of the contrast is certainly a part of its effect: as the exaltation of the first movement had been rarefied, so the grief of the second is equally profound. The minor opening gives way eventually to a lightening intrusion of major, especially the C major brilliance of the open trumpets, but the grieving resumes, more intense than ever. "The old wail returns, even more hopeless than before, the basses again walk in darkness," wrote Sir George Grove more than sixty years ago. In the last broken phrases pronounced by the strings even music seems to lose the power to say what is meant by the expression "words fail me."

The boiling energy of the scherzo provides a new source of animation for the rest of the work. There are no longer any humorous implications in the "scherzo," which is, in effect, an intermezzo which serves as transition to the finale. Without it, the passage from darkness to light would have been too dazzling; with it, we are again receptive to a movement on a grand, which is to say, a heroic scale.

Of the many marvels of this work, the finale is certainly the greatest, coming as it does in the wake of everything else, and rising to heights all its own. The choice of a theme from an earlier ballet may seem to some an allusion to its association with the heroic subject of that work, Prometheus. But the impulse would seem more profoundly musical, providing as it does a well-defined melodic outline, with a simple, malleable harmonic structure. Combined with them are a bass line of unusual character which attains, after a while, a governing part of the music which evolves. In this superb series of variations, which seems to show the "hero" in all his facets—whether he be Napoleon or Beethoven—what had once been a mere device, attains the dignity of a musical structure, pointing the way to its use as an independent piece in itself: by Brahms, by Elgar, Strauss ("Don Quixote"), and many others and echoing across the length of the symphony are the abrupt E-flat chords with which it began.

# 1964 — UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY PRESENTATIONS — 1965

All presentations are at 8:30 P.M. unless otherwise noted.

In Hill Auditorium

## NOVEMBER

- 4 LEONID KOGAN, *Violinist*
- 9 IRINA ARKHIPOVA, *Mezzo-soprano* (American debut)
- 14 RADUGA DANCERS, from six Soviet Republics
- 20 *Die Fledermaus* (Strauss) NEW YORK CITY OPERA COMPANY
- 22 *Merry Widow* (Lehar) NEW YORK CITY OPERA COMPANY (2:30 P.M.)
- 22 *Faust* (Gounod) NEW YORK CITY OPERA COMPANY

## JANUARY

- 30 BERLIN PHILHARMONIC, HERBERT VON KARAJAN, *Conductor*

## FEBRUARY

- 8 MINNEAPOLIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA,  
STANISLAW SKROWACZEWSKI, *Conductor*
- 23 POLISH MIME THEATRE

## MARCH

- 1 ROSALYN TURECK, *Pianist*
- 12 ROBERT MERRILL, *Baritone*

## APRIL

- 3 NATIONAL BALLET OF CANADA  
*Tickets: \$4.50—\$4.00—\$3.50—\$3.00—\$2.25—\$1.50*

---

*Messiah* (Handel) . . . . . Saturday, December 5  
and (2:30 P.M.) Sunday, December 6  
*Tickets: \$2.00—\$1.50—\$1.00—\$.75 (Now on sale)*

---

In Rackham Auditorium

## CHAMBER DANCE FESTIVAL

PAUL TAYLOR DANCE COMPANY . . . . . Friday, October 23  
JEAN-LÉON DESTINÉ AND HIS HAITIAN DANCE COMPANY Saturday, October 24  
FIRST CHAMBER DANCE QUARTET . . . (2:30 P.M.) Sunday, October 25

*Series tickets: \$6.00—\$5.00—\$4.00*  
*Single performances: \$3.50—\$2.50—\$2.00*

## CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL

BUDAPEST STRING QUARTET . . . February 17, 18, 19, 20, (2:30 P.M.) 21  
Beethoven cycle (5 concerts)

*Series tickets: \$12.00—\$9.00—\$7.00*  
*Single concerts: \$3.50—\$2.50—\$2.00*  
(On sale November 5)

---

For tickets and information, address  
UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY, Burton Tower